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THE ART REVIEW

DEVOTED TO ART, MUSIC, AND LITERATURE.

VOL. I.

JANUARY, 1871.

No. 3.

ENTERED according to Act of Congress, in the year 1871, by EDWIN H. TRAPTON, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington.

Editors can make extracts from THE ART REVIEW by giving the proper credit.

IN THE FIELDS.

BY FLORENCE PERCY.

Once more amid your pleasant scenes, oh Northern fields and woods,
Your shining streams and sunny farms, and shady solitudes,

Your pastures with their grazing herds, content and sleek and mute,
Your fair long rows of orchard trees, a-drop with rosy fruit.

I pluck the brilliant golden-rod and asters at my feet,
I climb the vine-draped boulder, and pull the bitter-sweet,

I thread the deepest brookside dells to seek the gentian blue,
And in sweet Nature's youth and joy, am young and joyful too.

Oh wood-paths, wild wood-paths, in days remembered well,

I walked unsnared amid your toils, nor ever tripped nor fell;

O'er tangled stems and twisted roots I bounded lightly then
Sure-footed as the antelope in wildest mountain glen.

Alas, alas, my foot has lost the cunning of old days,
I stumble in the briery paths, I shun the rocky ways:

The brambles tear my careless hair, and try to hold me back,

The thorn-boughs stab me as I pass, then close and hide my track.

Oh, blackbird, glad blackbird, that warbles all the day
Among the laden orchards, the old familiar lay.

When last I strolled as now among the stubble of the wheat,

You scarcely ceased your whistling at the rustle of my feet;—

You scarcely flew before me, as I came more near and near,

But sat unscared and sung as though for me alone to hear;

While now you hear my greeting voice with wonder and affright,

With sudden sidelong glances, and swift suspicious flight.

Oh, squirrel in the oak-tree, where are your acorns stored?

I used to find your hiding-place and wonder at your hoard—

We were fast friends and playmates then—oh, wherefore shun me now,

And chatter small defiance from the tall tree's topmost bough?

Oh Nature, Mother Nature, with your soul so strong and true,

What fate has snapped the tender bond that kept me close to you?

The quick electric sympathy alive to thrill and tone,
Which made your thousand varying moods seem echoes of my own?

True, I have wandered far away from all I prized in youth.

But I have loved the forest still, with strong unswerving truth.

Amid the city's noise have heard the far-off song of streams.

And rambled all the well-known woods and hill-sides in my dreams.

Oh take me to your heart again, and give to me once more

The loving, pure, unworldly soul I had in days of yore,—

Shut all the tiresome world away, protect me and defend,
And be, as in my happier youth, my mother and my friend.

FINE ART IN MASSACHUSETTS.

BY EDWARD E. HALE.

We have set on foot, with good prospect of success, two enterprises, both of generous plan, of which I think the results will be of the first importance to the education of our people in fine art. In the Western States you have some facilities for such enterprises such as we cannot rival, for you have white paper to write upon, while we have old blots to scratch out before we can begin. I believe that it will prove, that with the right local modifications in each State, the education of the people in fine art may be carried forward by such agencies as I will try to describe, so that the simplest of every-day people shall take satisfaction in daily artistic work, such as now our connoisseurs and critics cannot attain to.

The first of these agencies is the "Boston Art Museum." This institution is now taking form with prospects which a few years ago, we should all have thought beyond hope. It is the loyal union of several of our best institutions which now sets it in order, and they have the service of some very enthusiastic men to carry out their plans. The combination which brings about the new museum can be explained in a few words:

The BOSTON ATHENÆUM is an incorporated association, which for more than half a century has collected books, pictures and statues,—and has a creditable collection of all.

The BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY is an institution maintained by the city itself, at the public charge. It has, in a few years, become one of the largest libraries in the country, and has recently received, as a gift, one of the largest collections of prints,—known as the Tosti Collection, from Mr. Appleton. It has other collections of prints, one or two pictures and one or two statues.

HARVARD COLLEGE has for many years owned the Gray collection of prints,—one of the most choice in the country, or, indeed in the world.

The SOCIAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION, in trying to arrange for better instruction of the people in fine art, set on foot a subscription for the purchase ahead of casts of the best statues to be used in schools. Their committee, in determining where to put their collections, boldly persuaded all the three institutions I have named first, to consent to unite their art collections in one central museum. The truth is that none of them had room enough for the proper display of their treasures,—and yet no one of the three was in a condition to build.

We have so little land here fit for such buildings, that it is more than a piece of good fortune, that there was in reserve, a fifth power, which, like a good fairy, provided the site for the museum. A few public-spirited men here, a dozen or more years ago, persuaded the State of Massachusetts, with infinite difficulty, to enrich itself by turning into solid land, a mud-hole known as the "Back Bay," to the west of what was then Boston. It is now the very handsomest part of the city. The Legislature was of course wary; it suspected "Boston influence," it expected to be cheated, but, with the promise that the enterprise should pay all its own expenses,—and the certainty that no human being should profit as an individual by the work, with great hesitation it appointed the "Back Bay Commission,"